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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
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October 26, 2001

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

The Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington DC 20554

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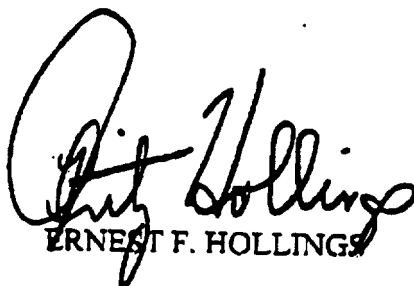
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Chairman Powell:

It has come to our attention that the board of General Motors will meet shortly to decide the disposition of their Hughes Electronics subsidiary, DirecTV. Either of the potential transactions involving DirecTV that have recently been reported by the media will obviously require significant review. We are troubled, however, by the prospects of the two largest domestic satellite providers becoming a single entity. Such consolidation would leave consumers with few, if any choices — particularly in rural America where a significant percentage of consumers depend solely on satellite service.

With the increasing use of broadband and digital services in the U.S. marketplace, it would not be prudent to lessen competition in the multichannel video programming marketplace. The Commerce Committee will continue to critically examine this and other consolidation related matters. We expect that the FCC will do the same.

Sincerely


ERNEST F. HOLLINGS


TED STEVENS

cc: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin

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